

SIR JOHN FRANKLIN.*

BY REV. T M EDDY.

NOTWITHSTANDING the disasters of the preceding expeditions, Captain Franklin was ready to undertake similar duties and brave similar exposure and sufferings. In his first land expedition he had gone from York Factory to the Polar Sea, at the mouth of Coppermine—or Hearn's—river. From thence a complete survey of the coast had been made eastward to Cape Turn-Again, in longitude 109 degrees, 25 minutes, west, and only about four hundred and fifty miles from the Atlantic survey of Captain Parry. The year after he returned the Government desired him to proceed a second time to the Polar Sea, for the purpose of exploring the coast *westward*, from the Coppermine river to Icy Cape, or the point east of it, where he would unite his survey with that made by Captain Beechey in the sloop Blossom, and thus complete the examination of the entire coast, except that portion lying between Cape Turn-Again and Cape Garry, or Melville Peninsula. The sufferings of the preceding expedition were from causes which he believed could be prevented; and so thought Dr. Richardson and Lieutenant Back, his former comrades, for they again accompanied him.

Past experience had taught him that the light birchen canoes of the Indians would not endure the crashing and straining of a Polar expedition. Ere leaving England he had three boats built—in shape as nearly resembling the birch canoes as possible—in *firmness* as dissimilar as they could be made. They were of ash; both ends exactly alike, and fitted to be steered either with a sweep or rudder. The largest—twenty-six feet long and five feet, four inches broad—was adapted for six rowers, a steersman, and an officer; it could be borne on the shoulders of six men, and was found, on trial, to be capable of carrying three tuns' weight; in addition to the crew. The two others were each twenty-four feet long, four feet, ten inches broad, and capable of receiving a crew of five men, a steersman, and an officer, with an additional weight of two and a half tuns. There was also a fourth—a little affair—called the "Walnut-shell," invented by Colonel Patley. It was nine feet long, four feet, four inches broad, framed of well-seasoned ash, fastened with thongs, covered with prepared canvas, and shaped like one valve of a walnut shell. It weighed only eighty-five pounds, could be taken apart, made up into several parcels, and, when needed, put together in less than twenty minutes.

When all was ready, Franklin's feelings had to undergo a severe struggle between conjugal affection and duty as an officer. His first wife lay at the point of death. She, however, urged her husband to depart on the day appointed, and gave him a silk flag, which she had made with her own

* Continued from page 445.

hands, with instructions to hoist it only when he reached the Polar Sea. She died the day after he sailed from England, which was February 16, 1825. On the 15th of March they reached the United States, where the brave Captain met greeting which made his heart warm. He says, "Our baggage and stores were instantly passed through the Custom-House—at New York—without inspection; cards of admission to public scientific institutions were forwarded to us the same evening, and during our stay every other mark of attention was shown by the civil and naval authorities, as well as by private individuals, indicating their lively interest in our enterprise. At Albany we experienced similar civilities. Every body seemed to desire our success, and a fervent prayer for our preservation and welfare was offered up by Rev. Dr. Christie, whose church we attended. The Hon. De Witt Clinton, the Governor of the state, assured me, that had we not been accompanied by a gentleman so conversant in the different routes and modes of traveling as Mr. Buchanan, he would have sent his son with us, or would himself have conducted us to the confines of the state." Put that honest, hearty, English recognition of American hospitality alongside the slanders of Dickens and others of the same truthful (?) type!

The details of their travel need not be given. Their boats did good service, and they reached Fort Resolution in safety, from which they departed July 31st, and, crossing "Slave Lake," entered M'Kenzie's river. They reached Fort Norman August 7, five hundred and seventy-four miles from Fort Resolution. They had made such rapid advance that Captain Franklin determined to push on to the Polar Sea, instead of halting till spring at Bear Lake, as he had intended. Leaving the largest part of his company to prepare winter quarters, the Captain and the remainder hurried down the river, and on the 16th of August, in latitude 69 degrees, 29 minutes, north, longitude 135 degrees, 41 minutes, west, the boat touched Garry Island, on the beach of which the Polar Sea rolled in all its majesty, entirely free from ice, and presenting no visible obstruction to navigation, while the waters were alive with seals, and white and black whales floated freely on the waves. Franklin's journal has this record: "The men pitched the tent on the beach, and I caused the Union silk flag to be hoisted, which my deeply lamented wife had made, and presented to me as a parting gift, under the express injunction that it was not to be unfurled before the expedition reached the sea. I will attempt no description of my emotions as it expanded to the breeze; however natural, and, for the moment, irrepressible, I felt it was my duty to restrain them, and that I had no right, by an indulgence of my own sorrows, to cloud the animated countenances of my companions. Joining, therefore, with the best grace I could command, in the general excitement, I endeavored to return with corresponding cheerfulness their warm congratula-

tions on having thus planted the British flag on this remote island of the Polar Sea."

On the 18th of August they turned toward Lake Bear, and on the 5th September reached "Fort Franklin," as Lieutenant Back had designated the winter home.

Here were spent two dreary Polar winters, the second of which was unusually severe. The thermometer frequently stood at from forty to fifty-eight degrees below zero. The precautions taken saved them from hunger. The officers, for the amusement and benefit of the men, opened a school three times a week, and Dr. Richardson delivered a course of lectures on geology. To these were added various amusements. The little fort was a sort of language epitome. English, Gaelic, French, and Indian were heard, and variations were given on the violin and bagpipe.

The circumstances connected with their summer surveys can not be sketched, unless there was room to enter largely into the geography and natural history of the Polar seas and coasts. At the mouth of M'Kenzie river they narrowly escaped robbery and murder from a large body of Esquimaux; but generally their relations with the tribes were of the most amicable character.

The long-searched-for North-West passage was not yet discovered. The number of miles of un-surveyed coast was reduced from fifteen hundred to six hundred. The most northern point attained was Cape Bathurst, in longitude 149 degrees, 37 minutes, west, latitude 70 degrees, 24 minutes, north, at which place they were within one hundred and sixty miles of a boat from the Blossom, lying to the west, waiting to meet them. Nevertheless, they believed the existence of the desired passage was demonstrated, and also the possibility of navigating the Polar basin.

Their surveys and scientific explorations, their investigations of the geology and natural history of the country, were accurate and valuable. During the winter Mr. Drummond collected two hundred specimens of birds and animals and more than fifteen hundred of plants.

On the 29th of September, 1827, Franklin and Richardson reached London; the rest of the English party shortly after landed at Portsmouth, except two persons who had died—one of consumption, and the other was accidentally drowned.

Thus ended this expedition, one of the most interesting and useful of all sent out in search of the North-West passage, or to explore the Arctic regions. They were gone from England two years and seven months.

FRANKLIN'S LOST EXPEDITION.

The Lords of the Admiralty were not content. Various other expeditions had sailed and returned, still the channel connecting the two oceans was not found. In 1827 the brave Captain Parry, with his old ship *Hecla*, made his fifth Polar voyage, and reached his northern *ultimatum*, 82 degrees, 45 minutes, north. From 1829 to 1833 Captain

John Ross, the pioneer of the nineteenth century in Arctic explorations, sanguine in the belief that he should send the glad eureka shout from the Pole, was beaten about with his brave comrades, having perils and hairbreadth escapes innumerable. At one time they were imprisoned eleven long months in the ice. On their return to England they were hailed as those received from the grave. From 1833 to 1835 Captain Back, who had accompanied Franklin in both his land expeditions, himself conducted a similar one—similar in its privation and intense suffering to the first. Reaching 68 degrees, 13 minutes, 57 seconds, north, in longitude 94 degrees, 58 minutes, 1 second, west, suffering and want compelled him to retrace his steps. In 1836, however, in the *Terror*, he undertook a voyage up Hudson's Strait. The same year the Hudson's Bay Company made an exploration under Messrs. Dease and Simpson, who boldly and adventurously performed almost miracles, and were handsomely and generously rewarded by the Home Government.

In 1845 the Lords Commissioners, on the recommendation of Sir John Barrow, determined to fit another expedition to the North Pole; and as they preferred *sending to going*, Captain John Franklin, K. C. H., was appointed to command. The well-tried ships *Erebus* and *Terror* were very carefully fitted up.

The reader must permit the record of the names officering these vessels. For their welfare, and the welfare of the brave men under their charge, how many an anguish-throb has been felt, how many a prayer offered, how many a noble deed performed!

EREBUS—Sir John Franklin, Captain.

Commander—Captain James Fitz James.

Lieutenants—Graham Gore, (Com.,) Henry T. D. Le Vesconte, James William Fairholme.

Mates—Charles F. des Vaux, (Lieut.,) Robert O. Sargent, (Lieut.)

Second Master—Henry F. Collins.

Surgeon—Stephen S. Stanley.

Assistant Surgeon—Harry D. S. Goodsir, (Acting.)

Paymaster and Purser—Charles H. Osman.

Ice-Master—James Reid, Acting.

Fifty-eight petty officers, seamen, etc. Full complement, seventy.

TERROR—Captain Fras. R. M. Crozier.

Lieutenants—Edward Little, (Com.,) George H. Hodgson, John Irving.

Mates—Frederick J. Hornby, (Lieut.,) Robert Thomas, (Lieut.)

Ice Master—T. Blankly, (Acting.)

Second Master—G. A. Maclean.

Surgeon—John S. Peddie.

Assistant Surgeon—Alexander M'Donald.

Clerk in Charge—Edward J. H. Helpman.

Fifty seven petty officers and seamen. Complement, sixty-eight.

A glance at the above list shows how carefully the ships were manned. The number of promoted officers in subordinate positions is far above the

average,* and proclaims an unusual amount of educated mind and nautical skill. But "let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might." What a comment on this text is the history of the *Terror* and *Erebus*!

They were not expected to return before 1847, unless they were successful. The last reliable intelligence concerning them was a letter written by Sir John on the 12th of July, 1845, from the Whale-fish Islands.

Since then all that man's wealth, indomitable perseverance, and death-defying effort, and woman's holy, tireless, ever-hoping love, could do has been done, but all in vain. The graves of some have been found; relics have been discovered; all have yielded in despair, save the devoted love of Lady Franklin. She, although the naval authorities, wearied by their efforts, have entered the missing Captains and their crews among "those who have died in her Majesty's service," she *hopes on*. She will not despair.

This lady, for whom so deep an interest has been felt, was the second daughter of John Griffin, Esq., of Bedford Place. She was married to Captain Franklin on the 5th of November, 1828. The name of Jane Franklin must hereafter be a synonym of conjugal affection. She has prayed, and wept, and written; she has passed from port to port, bidding God speed to every public and private vessel which has gone forth to search for the lost ones. How often has hope sprang up boundingly as some paragraph from the *Times*, *Athenium*, or *Chronicle* mentioned a rumor that the track had been found! How often did that "deferred hope" turn woefully back, making "the heart sick!"

A brief narration of the efforts for the recovery of the missing ships will now be sketched. Toward the fall of 1847 serious apprehensions were felt; but the Admiralty had such confidence in Franklin, his crews, the stability of his vessels, and abundance of his provisions, that they dismissed their fears as unreasonable. In 1848 their alarm increased, and a searching expedition was sent out. Expedition followed expedition in rapid succession. The old pioneers of Arctic exploration were written to, their opinions carefully noted, and every gleam of hope carefully followed.

In 1848 the Admiralty announced that to any whaling vessels that brought accurate information should "be paid one hundred guineas or more, according to circumstances." Lady Franklin, about the same time, offered rewards of £2,000 and £3,000 to the officers and crew of any vessel affording relief to Sir John, making extraordinary efforts to reach them, and more to bring them safely to England. In 1850 the British Government offered the following rewards to any persons of any country:

"1. To any party or person who, in the judgment of the Board of Admiralty, shall discover

* Those marked in parentheses were promoted subsequently to sailing.

and effectually relieve the crews of her Majesty's ships Erebus and Terror the sum of £20,000.

"2. To any party or parties, etc., who shall discover and effectually relieve any portion of the crews, or shall convey such intelligence as shall lead to the relief of any of the crew, £10,000.

"3. To any party or parties who shall, by virtue of his or their efforts, first succeed in ascertaining their fate, £10,000."

Surely these rewards would tempt cupidity to its utmost. But noble impulses were stirring. The efforts made to search and save the lost negative most emphatically the assertion of Burke, "The age of chivalry is past." Knight-errantry never afforded nobler daring.

How many relief ships have sailed I can not tell with certainty. I here present a list as complete as I can make it:

	Men.	Commanders.
1. H. M. ship Enterprise.....	68.....	Capt. Collinson.
2. " " Investigator.....	65.....	Com. McClure.
3. " " Plover.....	51.....	Com. Moore.
4. " " Resolute.....	65.....	Capt. H. Austin.
5. " " Assistance.....	60.....	Capt. E. Ommaney.
6. " " Pioneer, (screw steamer).....	30.....	Lieut. S. Osborn.
7. " " Intrepid, (screw steamer).....	38.....	Lieut. Cator.
8. " " The Lady Franklin.....	95.....	Mr. Penny.
9. " " Sophia, (tender to the above).....	92.....	Mr. Stewart.
10. U. S. brig Advance.....	90.....	Lieut. De Haven.
11. U. S. vessel Rescue.....	18.....	Mr. S. P. Griffin.
12. (English) Felix Yacht.....		Capt. Sir John Ross.
13. " " Mary, (tender to the Felix.)		
14. " " North Star.....		Com. Saunders.
15. " " Prince Albert.....	18.....	Com. Forsythe.

The above is a formidable array; and when we read the efforts made by each vessel, the self-sacrifice, and the perils which they barely escaped with life, we are compelled to exclaim, "There is no hope!"

In the spring of 1849 Lady Franklin made an appeal to American sympathy in a touching letter to the President of the United States, and which should be inserted entire did space permit. After detailing the efforts made by her own Government and the assistance promised by Russia, she pleads earnestly that there should be American action "in a national spirit." This was answered by the Secretary of State—Hon. John M. Clayton—in a delicate and admirable manner, pledging all the aid the executive government could render, "in the exercise of its constitutional powers," to "rescue your husband and his companions." Subsequently she addressed a second letter to the President. The Executive, however, had no authority to build vessels suited to such a voyage, and was obliged to forego action till the meeting of Congress.

Meanwhile Mr. Henry Grinnell, a worthy and wealthy merchant of New York, with his own means, built two small vessels, and tendered them to the Government of the United States, that they might be officered and manned by competent seamen and scientific explorers, and more especially that the crews might be under United States naval discipline. The proposition was favorably reported

to Congress, and resolutions passed both houses receiving the vessels on Mr. Grinnell's proposition.

The vessels were brigantines—the Advance one hundred and forty-four tons, the Rescue ninety-one—and cost the donor \$30,000. The Advance was manned by twenty men; the Rescue by eighteen. The expedition was placed under the command of Lieutenant De Haven, a young man, but one of good judgment and undaunted intrepidity. The result demonstrated the wisdom of the selection. His officers were Mr. Murdoch, sailing-master, Dr. E. K. Kane, surgeon and naturalist, and Mr. Lovell, midshipman. The Rescue was under command of Mr. Griffin. The expedition was singularly fortunate in its historian, if not in the main object for which it sailed. Dr. Kane's book, descriptive of Arctic scenery and their expedition generally, is one of the works you must read through before you can put it down.

The little vessels cleared from New York May 23, 1850, and were absent sixteen months. When they reached Melville Bay—also called the Devil's Nip—the seamen began to witness the grandeur and peril of Arctic scenery. Masses of ice came around them—rolling, dashing, and grinding—occasionally, as if in mere sport, throwing one of the vessels almost on its beams ends, but by using saws, axes, ice anchors, and ropes they kept afloat.

They had on one of the ships a French cook, always on the *qui vive*, bouncing hither and thither with all the agility of his skipping, bouncing race. Aiming one day to make himself useful as well as ornamental, he mounted a berg, and was cutting a place for the anchor, when, presto, the whole mass split open, and down went the professor of gastronomy into the water—thirty feet fall before he reached it, and then as much farther as specific gravity and momentum would carry him. Luckily the mass did not immediately close up, and poor *monsieur* was fished up, half dead with fright and cooled "slightly."

On the 7th of June they became locked in, and so remained till July 23d, amusing themselves with foot-races, theatricals, bear-shooting, and running from wounded bears, etc. While here they were joined by the Prince Albert, Captain Forsythe. August 7th they reached Cape Dudley Digges, and beheld with wonder the "crimson cliffs"—cliffs of dark brown stone, covered with snow which bears a crimson hue. The vessels beat onward to Wolstenholme Sound, and, standing toward the south-west, emerged from the fields of ice into the open waters of Lancaster Sound. Here they were parted by a severe storm, August 18th. The Advance made her way to Barrow's Straits, when they again found the Prince Albert. Captain Forsythe had been disappointed in finding an outlet, and determined to sail for home. The two vessels remained together a day or two and separated—the Albert homeward bound, the Advance determined to go ahead. Off Leopold Island the Advance gave the John Bulls a taste of its quality; the occurrence

* See Repository next month.

is thus described by one of the attaches of the Prince Albert—Mr. Snow—who chanced to be on the deck of the Advance at the time: "The way was before them—the stream of ice had to be either gone through boldly, or a long *detour* made; and despite the heaviness of the stream, *they pushed the vessel through in her proper course*. Two or three shocks as she came in contact with some large pieces were unheeded; and the moment the last block was past the bow, the officer sang out, 'So steady as she goes on her course,' and came aft as if nothing more than ordinary sailing had been going on. I observed our own little bark following nobly in the American's wake; and, as I afterward learned, she got through it pretty well, though not without much doubt of the propriety of keeping on in such procedure after the 'mad Yankee,' as he was called by our mate." The affair reminds us decidedly of two school-boys jumping into the creek in mid-winter with the exclamation, "We won't take a darel!"

Near Cape Riley the Rescue overtook her consort, and they here fell in with a portion of an English exploration. Together the explorers of both nations proceeded on their work of love. On the east side of Wellington Channel—Beechey Island or Cape—they found in a cove unmistakable evidence that Sir John and his company had been there in April, 1846. They found a piece of canvas bleached to snowy whiteness, marked with the name of the Terror. Near by was a prostrate guide-board, and a number of tin cannisters, such as were used for packing meats; remnants of clothing, patched and threadbare, part of a wool-lined India-rubber glove, some old sacks, a tub partly full of charcoal, and an unfinished rope-mat showed that those whom they sought had been there and had departed in haste.

In a small sheltered cove they found the most touching traces of the lost seamen. These were three graves, with a board at the head of each, with the name of the sleeper. There they were; the hardy sailors stood and gazed silently, tearfully, on the British graveyard—the English cemetery in the Arctic Ocean. American and English read reverently the inscriptions:

"Sacred to the memory of JOHN TORRINGTON, who departed this life January 1, A. D. 1846, on board her Majesty's ship Terror, aged 20 years."

"Sacred to the memory of JOHN HARTNELL, A. B. of her Majesty's ship Erebus; died January 4, 1846, aged 25 years. 'Thus saith the Lord of hosts, Consider your ways.' Haggai, chap. i, 5, 7."

"Sacred to the memory of W. BRAINE, R. M. of her Majesty's ship Erebus, who died April 3, 1846, aged 32 years. 'Choose you this day whom you will serve.' Joshua, chap. xxiv, part of the 15th verse."

From these graves there were sledge tracks toward the north—and no more could be ascertained. How long they remained after the 3d of April none can tell.

The American vessel reached Barrow's Inlet on September 4, 1850, and narrowly escaped being frozen in. After remaining seven or eight days they abandoned the effort to enter, and moved slowly westward, "battling with ice every rod of the way." On the 11th they reached Griffin's Island, 96 degrees west longitude from Greenwich. They could go no farther west. They turned eastward, hoping to reach Davis Strait, on their homeward way, by the southern route, before the darkness of Polar winter.

They could not. They were hemmed in, near the mouth of Wellington Channel, by hummock ice, and were being resistlessly floated with the frozen mass toward the Pole.

And now Polar darkness began to shroud them. Every day they drifted north, and every day the thermometer sank lower. They were liable to be crushed any instant in the compact mass of moving ice. Small was their hope of reaching home. They kept cheerful, and made preparation for winter comfort and amusement as tranquilly as if lying in Barrow's Inlet.

Before the last of October the sun paid them his last visit for the season, and went into winter quarters. Polar night was around them. The mercury congealed, and the spirit thermometer showed 46 degrees below zero. They drifted up Wellington Channel almost to where Captain Penny supposed he beheld the Polar basin, and where "there is a more genial clime than between the Arctic Circle and seventy-fifth degree." *Almost there*, suddenly the mighty tide ebbed, and back, back, resistlessly floated the vessels through Barrow's Straits into Lancaster Sound! For five months the pressure of ice kept the Advance "elevated seven feet by the stern, and keeled two feet, eight inches, starboard." Thus they drifted along the south-west coast of Baffin's Bay more than a thousand miles from Wellington Channel.

The night lasted eleven weeks. It was not altogether darkness. Aurora borealis streamed with its luster high up that northern sky, and, stranger still, *Aurora Parhelia* dotted the starry dome with mock suns and moons. "Brilliant, too, were the northern constellations; and when the real moon was at its full, it made its stately circuit in the heavens without descending below the horizon, and lighted up the vast piles of ice with a pale luster, almost as great as the morning twilight of more genial skies."

They passed the time in amusements in the ships and on the ice. Five hours of each twenty-four they spent in the open air, drawing sledges-loads of provisions taken from the carcass of the shaggy-vested Polar bear, skating, ball playing, etc. Once a week each man washed his body in snow water. Thus sickness was avoided.

Many were their dangers, and imminent also. On the 23d of January the crushing ice threatened to grind the sturdy vessels into destruction. They were ninety miles from land. They loaded their

sledges with provisions; lowered their boats; their officers and crews stood on the ice, holding the ropes of the sledges in their hands, watching their much-loved ships. Suddenly, in terrific violence, burst upon them a north-eastern gale, shrouding them in a dense snow-drift. Had the vessels then gone down, they must *all have perished*. But God, the Omnipotent, reigneth! He held their lives in his hand, and by the strength of his arm were they upheld.

On the 18th February three hearty cheers from both crews greeted the golden rim of the sun, as it came up from behind ice-mountains and glittering snow-drifts.

The vessels continued to drift through Davis Straits till the 6th of June, when the ice gave way. This event had been anticipated, and due preparation made. But the suddenness of the "break up" had not been anticipated. A peculiar cracking was heard; all hands were on the look-out; another and another, and, lo! the vast field in which they had been imprisoned so many long months was rent in all directions. About forty-eight hours were spent in cutting loose the ice which clung to the stern of the *Advance*, and the ships were again afloat. The glad shouts of the men may be imagined. They entered open water June 10th, in latitude 65 degrees, 30 minutes, north.

The vessels repaired to Godhaven on the Greenland coast, where they refitted. This done, they again turned northward, determined to make another effort to reach the Pole. They traversed the coast of Greenland to the seventy-third degree. They then bore westward, and on the 11th of July, at Baffin's Island, fell in with their old acquaintance, *Prince Albert*, which was out on another cruise.

Lieutenant De Haven pressed on till August 3d, when, finding the north and west closed against him, he determined to sail homeward. He had done all that he could—done bravely and well. The vessels bounded over the waves as though themselves conscious that they were "hieving to a quiet home."

Off Newfoundland a severe storm parted the ships. The *Advance* reached Brooklyn safely September 30th, and the *Rescue* a few days afterward. The expedition returned without losing a single man!

In October the vessels were returned to Mr. Grinnell by the Government, with the proviso that they were to be surrendered to the Secretary of the Navy the following spring, "if required for another expedition in search of Sir John Franklin."

Reader, do you not err when you say that Selfishness is a *universal* despot? Dr. Thomson has said the "history of modern missions has furnished an appendix to the eleventh chapter of Hebrews." Has not the search for Sir John Franklin added another chapter to the—alas! too meager—history of BROTHERLY LOVE?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)